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NOTES OF A VISIT

TO

AMERICAN ASYLUMS.

BY

ALEXANDER ROBERTSON, M.D.,

PHYSICIAN TO THE TOWN'S HOSPITAL AND CITY PAROCHIAL ASYLUM, GLASGOW.

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NOTES OF A VISIT TO AMERICAN ASYLUMS.

Last summer, in the course of a tour in the United States and Canada, I visited a number of Asylums for the Insane, jotting down my observations and impressions at the earliest opportunity after leaving the respective establishments. They are now submitted in a condensed form in these notes; and I trust that they may convey to the readers somewhat of the interest experienced by myself during my visits. It is almost superfluous to say that the physician-superintendents received me most courteously, and their kind attention will ever be suggestive of pleasant recollections in connection with my trans-Atlantic trip. Without further preface, I shall proceed first to give a short account of the Michigan Asylum,* visited 13th June, 1868.

THE MICHIGAN ASYLUM.

It occupies a very central position in the state, about a mile from the pretty little town of Kalamazoo. The ground in the entire district is flat and prairie-like in character. The site of the asylum is, however, somewhat elevated, and commands a view of a considerable stretch of country, though uninteresting as a prospect. Attached to the institution there are 167 acres of land, on which there is a good deal of wood, especially oak, hickory, and chestnut. A paling of no great height surrounds the grounds. Leaving the town road, a somewhat tortuous walk of about two hundred yards in length leads up to the principal entrance into the asylum: The building is of brick, and consists of an extensive front, with the offices and superintendent's house in the centre,

* On approaching this institution I was struck by a loud, interrupted croaking noise, not unlike the *music* of the "Canadian band" I had heard in the country districts of Canada, and which is produced especially by the bull frogs in the marshy parts of the "bush." I soon, however, learned that it was the peculiar song of the seventeen year locusts, who had lately emerged from their living tombs, and were merrily living through the short span of their new existence. I afterwards came across them at different points of the American Continent eastward, as far as Baltimore. It is the male who makes the monotonous and somewhat disagreeable sound; the females busy themselves in preparing for the new generation, and are silent.

standing out in relief, and surmounted by a dome. The extremities of this frontage are crowned with towers, which act as ventilators, and on each side two wings recede from it to a considerable distance. Some parts are two, and others three storeys in height.

Though opened for a small number of patients in 1859, building operations have been in progress ever since, at short intervals, and a part of the male side is not yet finished. It is the only asylum for the State of Michigan. The majority of the patients are supported at the public expense, although a considerable number are private, paying rates of board from five dollars (about 15s. at current rate of exchange) a week upwards. It has been constructed for the most part under the special directions of the medical superintendent, Dr. Van Deuzen, the Governor of the State having appointed him "building commissioner" for that purpose; and both in plan and general arrangement, it reflects much credit on his knowledge of the requirements of such an institution.

The directory consists of six trustees, appointed by the Senate, on the nomination of the Governor of the State, who have the entire control of the asylum. Their appointment is an honorary one, lasts for six years, and is so arranged that not more than two retire at a time. Dr. Deuzen's services are much appreciated by the trustees, as is indicated by the fact of their having placed a fine oil painting of him in the board-room along with those of two of the leading directors. He very courteously showed me over the entire establishment.

Interior Plan, &c.—On each floor there is a wide central corridor, with day-room, dining-room, and bed-rooms right and left. On one side is a recess, occupying the space of about two bed-rooms, with a bow window looking towards the front of the asylum. The parlour connected with each corridor—or hall, as it is called—is of moderate size, but along with the alcove and gallery the day-room accommodation is quite sufficient. Each hall has its own dining-room. Dr. Deuzen disapproves of the *general* dining-room system, as having a tendency to break down classification. Each of the bed-rooms contains 1,700 cubic feet—a large amount; but it is considered to be not more than is necessary, seeing that the patients are not restricted from sitting in them during the day, and they not unfrequently take advantage of this liberty. There are also a small number of associated dormitories with from six to twelve beds; but the patients for the

most part have each a bed-room. The furnishing of the various apartments was, upon the whole, comfortable, and in excellent taste; but there was a bareness about the white-washed walls of some of the galleries, though it was stated that engravings, &c., were gradually being introduced as the funds would permit. The floors are oiled, and so are the dining-room tables, no table cloths being used. Horse hair mattresses are in universal use for the beds.

Ventilation, Heating, &c.—The upper sash of the windows is fixed; there are two below, the outer one—also fixed—of cast iron, and unglazed; the inner one of wood, and glazed, is moveable to any extent. Hot air in the cold season is admitted by openings near the floor; the apertures of the ventilating flues are close to the ceiling, through which the used air passes along the flues into chambers in the attics, and finally into the open air through the cupolas. The air is heated by passing over steam pipes in the basement, and is farther propelled by a centrifugal fan. The waste steam is afterwards used in the washing-house, and the waste water from the baths and sinks is economised for the water-closets. Dr. Deuzen drew my special attention to the *deafening* of the various apartments, which is effected by four-inch brick arches, “independent of the flooring joists above, and the ceiling joists below.” This arrangement he considers both cheap and effectual, rendering, as it does, each room nearly fire-proof.

Meals.—Breakfast at half-past six a.m.; dinner at twelve; supper at six p.m. All the patients have butcher meat, or fish, twice daily. They are not restricted to quantity, the attendant supplying as much as is wanted. With the exception of a very few, all have knives and forks of an ordinary pattern, i.e., the entire edge is cutting, and the prongs of the forks are separate throughout. Should the patient be suicidal, an attendant sits beside him at meals. There are three attendants in each dining-room, for fourteen or sixteen patients. Before any one rises from table, the attendant nearest the door, beginning at the patient next him, takes the fork and knife from each, proceeding upwards to the head of the table, and puts them into the cupboard at the upper end of the room. The food is brought into the dining-room along-side of the cupboard, by the “dumb waiter;” and a railway in the basement facilitates its conveyance from the kitchen.

Employment.—Very little out-door work is done by the

patients, and only two or three were engaged at the shops. It was urged that most of the inmates had been overwrought before admission, and that therefore they were not asked to work or even walk much. They do, however, take daily exercise in the grounds, when the weather permits, and parties of two, three, or four, are permitted to walk beyond them into the town, as well as the country, under the care of an attendant. There is no feeling in the neighbourhood against this extended exercise.

Amusements.—Dr. Deuzen said that his great principle of treatment was to study the patients' wishes. Thus, in amusements, if there is a large proportion of young people resident he may have two dance nights in the week; but should they be more advanced in life, reading in their own rooms would be preferred. No reading or writing classes are conducted; no regular lectures nor regular anything, though occasional lectures are given to the more intelligent. He had been assured elsewhere by those who had recovered that those *regular* lectures and parties to which they were required to go had been very irksome to them. There is a fine magic lantern with a large supply of slides belonging to the institution, which is a favourite means of amusement. There is a good library of six hundred volumes.

Religious Service.—There is no chapel; but a paid chaplain conducts worship in one of the halls on Sabbaths, and visits at other times also.

Restraint.—Three patients were wearing leather muffs at the time of my visit, which were fixed at the wrist to a belt encircling the waist. They were quiet in my presence, though they were stated to be occasionally violent and destructive. The camisole is also sometimes used. No patient was in seclusion. The employment of mechanical restraint in the forms referred to, Dr. Deuzen said, was much better than to have attendants struggling with refractory lunatics (which he believed would otherwise necessarily happen), for he had known insane persons who rather than yield would resist the attendants till death, whereas they immediately became calm when restrained by the muffs or camisole. There are no padded rooms in the asylum.

Medical Treatment.—The medicines principally used are preparations of cinchona, iron, arsenic, and nux vomica. Ague occurs in the district, but less so now than formerly, since the ground has been cleared to a large extent. In many cases, however, there is a latent disposition to this disease, giving a

character to nervous and other ailments, though not manifesting itself openly in its ordinary form. The medicines are given out in single doses by the "supervisor" (the convenient and appropriate title of the principal attendant in many American asylums) to the attendants in little earthenware dishes on which the patients' names are painted.

Classification.—Very few epileptics are admitted, and Dr. Deuzen generally declines receiving them. There are eight classes on each side. Besides the form of mental disease, they are arranged according to their education, manners, and tastes. It matters little what rate of board is paid. Two restaurant keepers were pointed out to me paying high rates, who, though recovering, would not be permitted to mix with the general body of quiet and convalescent inmates, simply because they had never been accustomed to, and were not fit to mix in, other than rude society. Marked quietude and order prevailed everywhere; even in the ward for the excited class only two patients were talking somewhat loudly. Another noticeable feature was the absence of requests for dismissal. However, a number of the men who were not employed in any way had a listless, apathetic look, and time seemed to hang heavily on their hands.

Attendants.—They are all engaged by the Medical-Superintendent, and are of a very superior order. Dr. Deuzen said that he had made the securing and retaining of good attendants a special study. More than ordinary deference was paid to them. Thus at my visit, I was formally introduced, on going into each of the galleries—"Dr. R., Miss —— &c." The proportion in the halls for the acute cases is one attendant to three or four patients; and the maximum number under treatment in these halls is fourteen. When this number has been increased temporarily they were found to annoy and irritate each other. In the convalescent halls the number of patients is larger with a smaller proportion of attendants. One to six is the average proportion of attendants to patients throughout the asylum. There is no indoor night-attendant except in cases of sickness. A watchman walks round the asylum outside during the night at short intervals.

Form of Admission.—In the case of private patients it is very simple. Only one medical certificate is required; and the certifying medical man does not require to state the evidences of insanity. Notwithstanding this ease of committal, Dr. Deuzen had never known any one attempt to send a sane person into the asylum. In the case of paupers, or

“indigent” insane, as they are termed, two medical men must depose to the insanity of the person before the Judge of Probate of the county, who is required also to take evidence, and be satisfied of the poverty of the patient before he can grant an order for his admission. The Medical-Superintendent can decline to admit patients. He showed me a note from an ex-Governor of the State at present in high social position, desiring that an intimate friend who had become insane should be admitted, and at the same time told me that he had declined receiving him on the ground that his relatives were well able to send him to one of the eastern institutions. There being only one vacancy, he had considered it right to give the preference to a pauper patient who would otherwise have been consigned to the poor-house.

It will be inferred from the last remark that the asylum is quite full. Two hundred and thirty patients were resident; but the number of insane in the State is considerably higher. Many are in the poor-house, where their treatment is indifferent—to use a mild expression. To a certain extent the pressure on the accommodation has been met by the transference of some of the quiet and harmless patients to the care of their friends; but, in all, not above fifty or sixty had been disposed of in this way since the erection of the asylum. There had never been any attempt to introduce the Gheel system in the State, and Dr. Deuzen does not think it would suit the character of the American people.

Causes.—Dr. Deuzen, in his last annual report, directs special attention to one of the causes of mental disease in the females under his care—the revolting and unnatural habit of forced abortion, to which public attention has been lately attracted in this country by the discussion of its propriety at the meetings of a certain society. His remarks on this subject are well worthy of quotation*:—“Fearfully afflictive as is insanity under any circumstances, it is unmistakably and unspeakably more so, when, in the person of one bearing the cherished and sacred name of wife, it is in one sense self-induced, and by the commission of a crime against a far higher than human law, and in direct violation of the holiest instinct of her nature. There has been no uniformity in the character of mental disease thus developed. The derangement of mental function has generally occurred as a result of local injury, and the serious impairment of

* Annual Report for 1867.

general health directly traceable to the criminal act. In a few cases it has operated directly as a moral cause, as for instance when the unfortunate sufferer has borne a child, which has been permitted to remain with her only long enough to show the unhappy mother the priceless value of the gift she had previously refused to accept. In these cases the immediate cause of insanity was remorse. Unless this most disastrous practice be speedily arrested by the efforts now being used to suppress it, and by more stringent laws severely punishing all parties implicated, it will materially increase the number of female patients annually presented for treatment."

Recoveries.—The recoveries among *recent* cases admitted in the course of last year were 70 p. c. By recent cases is meant those in which insanity has not existed longer than a year. Of the chronic cases admitted during the year scarcely 20 p. c. were cured.

The next asylum visited was

THE INDIANA HOSPITAL FOR THE INSANE.

Situated on rising ground about a couple of miles from Indianapolis, the capital of the State, it commands a view of a considerable district of country only partially cleared of the "primeval forest" which still covers much of the great plain that surrounds the young but flourishing city. This asylum, the only one for the State which contains about a million and a half of inhabitants, was founded principally through the energetic action of Miss Dix, whose philanthropic labours in behalf of the insane in this and neighbouring states, will cause her name ever to be held in veneration as one of the benefactors of the human race. At present there are 330 inmates resident, but when the additions in progress are completed there will be accommodation for 500. Only acute cases of disease are admitted; that is, those of less than a year's standing; and no epileptic is received. Not half of the insane in the State, even when the new buildings are full, will have asylum treatment; the remainder are stowed away in prisons and poor-houses, where, I was informed, their treatment is "horrible."

Patients are admitted on the warrant of two justices who must see the person either at his own home or when brought to them, and must also be satisfied with the medical certificate and the statements of the friends. No

payment is received from any one. The rich are considered to have a claim to admission, as they are taxed for the maintenance of the institution. The Board of Management consists of three commissioners appointed by the State Legislature. They, however, as well as the Physician-Superintendent, hold office only so long as the political party to which they belong is in power. Should the opposition be in the ascendant at the next election they would be asked to resign their appointments. Dr. Lockhart has only been four years superintendent; previously he was engaged in private practice. Besides the ordinary duties of his office, the onus of the construction of the extensive additions now in progress rests upon him, though he consults with a small building committee. He engages the tradesmen, and, as there is no overseer, he instructs them as to the details of their work. When completed, it is expected that this new portion will have occupied about two years in erection.

The entire edifice is of brick, and is from three to four storeys in height. It consists of an extensive front, from the extremities of which wings are prolonged backwards at right angles. There are 760 acres of land connected with it. The airing-courts, which have been only recently provided, are small and cheerless, being surrounded by high palings; and there is no view from any of them. They were nearly bare, there being only a little grass here and there on the principal male one. Dr. Lockhart would like to enclose about 40 acres with a high wall so as to enable him to give the patients more out-door exercise than they have at present, on account of the marked disposition which they manifest to elope. He also finds that they are apt to combine among themselves.

The general plan of the interior is the same as that of the Michigan Asylum—a central corridor with rooms and alcoves on the sides. At the end of some of the halls is a small reception-room where patients' friends can see them instead of in the general reception-room; and this is found very convenient, particularly with excited cases. The extraction openings for the ventilation of the rooms and corridors are near the floor, and the working of the system is considered satisfactory. A large fan is in course of construction to force air through the entire establishment. Along with Dr. Lockhart I walked along the main tunnel through which, when completed, the fresh, or fresh and heated air will be forced, and observed its branches to the different departments. We also went up into the attics and looked at the belvederes by

which the used air will escape from the building. The ventilation of some of the single rooms was into a corridor, and in more than one of these a close, unpleasant odour was very evident. The windows of the *strong* rooms are now secured by *wrought* iron stanchions, as elopements have been frequent. But, besides these, I was shown rooms, or, properly speaking, *cells*, in course of construction, in which the windows—a sort of embrasure—were not far from the ceiling and appeared to me about 8 or 10 inches in depth and about $2\frac{1}{2}$ feet in breadth. However, in connection with these prison-like arrangements, it is right to keep in remembrance that a larger proportion of acute cases is treated here than in many asylums, so that the difficulties of management are proportionately increased. There are some dormitories, one of which is specially fitted up for patients disposed to self-destruction, and is designated in the physician's annual report, "The Suicidal Dormitory." The water-closets are all ventilated from below. Just under the pan a pipe passes off from the soil pipe of the closet and terminates with others in the stalk of the large furnace; the sewers have also a connection with this chimney. Offensive gases are thus removed from both, and, if not entirely destroyed by the high temperature to which they are exposed, they are at least removed from the building, and so widely diffused in the upper atmosphere as in all probability to be rendered innocuous. The halls looked dull, not being well lighted at some points; their walls were lime-washed. There was a lack of engravings and of other objects of interest.

Patients.—As the asylum is crowded, it is difficult to maintain proper order, and this, to a certain extent, might also account for the untidy state of the clothing of a number of the patients. Many, especially of the females, were without shoes and stockings, and, I was told, they "won't keep them on." I saw one young woman with a strait-jacket on, locked in a box-bed with a heavy, grated, wooden lid. She was stated to be getting quite fat confined there, though her condition was by no means good. It was urged that if she had not been so restrained she would probably have exhausted herself by her restlessness. Many of the male inmates had a listless, degraded aspect. This, perhaps, might partially arise from the fact that only a small proportion are employed on the extensive grounds. About 20 women were engaged in sewing or knitting in the general work-room. Violent and destructive patients are put to bed naked in the summer time. It was argued, What was the use of giving them bedding or clothes when their first proceeding, after going into their

rooms, was to tear them to shreds? I observed a few restrained by muffs similar to those already described. The hours of the patients are from half-past four in the summer and five in the winter, in the morning, till eight at night. There being no general dining-hall, meals are taken in the dining-room of each gallery in parties of about sixteen. I saw the tables neatly set for dinner in several of the rooms. They are for the most part allowed ordinary forks and knives, which, however, are all removed before any one leaves the table.

Amusements, &c.—Promiscuous dances are not approved of, as they are considered exciting. There are occasional entertainments by the magic-lantern; bagatelle and croquet are provided; and it is contemplated introducing billiard tables and constructing bowling-alleys soon. There is a good library, which is stated to be largely used. Considerable parties take walking exercise in the grounds when the weather permits, though, as already said, this liberty cannot be granted to many, owing to their disposition to escape.

About 100 out of the 330 patients were getting special medical treatment. Most of the females were using iron in one form or another; opium is given in large doses in cases of acute melancholia. Many are taking bromide of potassium in 30 gr. doses; no medicine like it, in Dr. Lockhart's experience, in its influence over epilepsy *and in repressing the habit of masturbation*. In those addicted to this vice he had formerly tried the effect of a silver ring through the prepuce to prevent its retraction, but in their efforts to continue the vile practice it had been torn out. The system of dispensing the medicines is similar to the plan in the Michigan Asylum, and is very favourably spoken of.

To give an idea of the substantial character of the food, I append the dietary for two days, extracted from the diet-table of the establishment.

WEDNESDAY.

BREAKFAST.—Meat, bread, butter, coffee.

DINNER.—Meat, boiled potatoes, hominy, beans, cooked onions.

SUPPER.—Bread, tea, pie-plant pies.

THURSDAY.

BREAKFAST.—Fried potatoes, cold meat, coffee, bread.

DINNER. } *South Side*.—Soup, potatoes, hominy, corn and wheat bread.
 } *North Side*.—Meat, potatoes, hominy, corn and wheat bread.

SUPPER.—Bread, tea, cold meat, molasses.

Animal food is given at least twice every day.

Attendants.—The proportion of attendants is one to eleven or twelve patients. Much difficulty is found in getting good

ones. After their patients are in bed they are permitted to meet together for three-quarters of an hour every alternate night. They are granted leave of absence from the institution every second Saturday evening, and every second Sabbath. A night attendant on each side visits the wards every two hours, and gives the medicines when ordered; the male one also makes the round of the buildings outside.—Visitors are admitted daily from two to five p.m., and sometimes as many as a hundred are shown over a large part of the asylum and see the patients, who were stated not to resent this inspection, nor was it much complained of by the officials.

CINCINNATI ASYLUM.

This, the principal asylum of the State of Ohio, is beautifully situated well up the side of an elevated ridge, about seven miles from Cincinnati, the “Queen City of the West.” It commands a fine and varied prospect of rich, undulating country, woodland and cultivated fields alternating in pleasing variety. It is very conveniently situated, the main road from the city running at the bottom of the grounds, and the railway station at the village of Carthage, in the valley, is only about five minutes’ walk distant; a canal also runs through the grounds in front, about a hundred yards from the main building. These facilities of access, though desirable in many respects, are complained of as a disadvantage on account of the very large number of the friends and relatives of the patients who are thereby induced to visit the institution; and as they are freely admitted to many of the halls and rooms, their visits not only encroach on the time of the officials, but in some instances even exert a prejudicial influence on the mental condition of the insane.

The asylum is of brick, and consists of a central building five storeys in height, in front of which is a fine portico of three storeys. This is reached by a flight of steps leading into a lobby, that terminates behind in the rotunda—a large hall in the centre of the edifice, nearly ninety feet high, and lighted from above through the great dome, which, on the outside, forms the most striking feature in the aspect of the institution. Around the rotunda are five corridors, communicating with the halls on each floor. From the central building extend laterally two wings three storeys high, and intersected at regular intervals by cross buildings of four

storeys, one of which on each side is surmounted by a small dome.

There was a fine collection of American singing birds within the portico, whose notes were very pleasant to listen to while wending our way up the somewhat steep road leading to the main entrance. After a courteous reception from Dr. Langdon, the physician-superintendent, who has had the management of the asylum since its erection, about eight years ago, he showed me over the greater part of the house.

The general arrangement of the wards is much the same as that of the asylums already described, viz., a central corridor with rooms on each side. These corridors or halls are broad, well lighted, and cheerful, the dimensions of some being 124 feet in length, twelve in breadth, and thirteen in height. Connected with each are the dining-room, parlour, and bedrooms (8 by 12½ feet), many of which accommodate two patients. The seclusion rooms are very secure, the windows being protected by thick iron rods. They have a square inspection opening in the door, and in the corner of each is a fixed night-stool, which can be flushed and emptied by the attendants without going into the room. There are some dormitories, the largest containing about fourteen beds. The attendants' rooms have a window looking into the larger dormitories, but no attendant sleeps among the patients. The bath-room, the water-closet, and the drop for the dirty clothes are at the end of the main hall, but shut off from it. In each dining-room is an elevator for the food. The bareness of the walls is relieved by a goodly number of appropriate engravings; singing birds in cages are to be seen here and there; and fine collections of flowers in pots are placed at the end of some of the galleries. The furnishing throughout is good, but particularly so in the department for the private, or *pay patients*, as they are called; for here they are kept apart from those supported at the public expense. There is no fan used to assist the ventilation of the house; Dr. Langdon thinks it sufficiently good without it. He believes that the working of the fan is very apt to be neglected at night, when it is most of all required. There is a downward and outward current from the halls, rooms, &c., to a large air-duct in the cellar, which underlies the entire length of the establishment, and terminates in the chimney-stalk. This stalk contains a number of flues from the boiler, washing-house, gas work, &c., which heat the air around and cause an upward current.

The water-closets have also a downward ventilation to this stalk.

The amount of land connected with the asylum is only about 38 acres, and is felt to be much too limited. Quite recently, with the concurrence of the Physician-Superintendent, two pretty little lakes have been formed, about forty or fifty yards behind, and to the side of the main building. They certainly add greatly to the beauty of the establishment, whatever opinion may be entertained regarding their safety. I have also said that the canal divides the grounds in front, along which boats are plying at all hours of the day.

Patients.—Upwards of 400 were resident at my visit. Both in person and dress the condition of the great majority was all that could be desired. However, some of the inmates of the wards for the demented class, and also those for the more unruly, had a slovenly aspect, several being without shoes and stockings. A few of the excited ones wore the camisole, and two who were so restrained were in seclusion. One who was walking about in the hall, in addition to the waistcoat, had her arms fixed to her sides by leather belts, connected with one which encircled the body. I was informed that there had been only one suicide in the canal, notwithstanding its proximity, during the eight years of the existence of the asylum, and that there had been none in the lakes; but they, as before stated, are of very recent formation. I saw a number of tables very neatly arranged for dinner. All, except the violent class, use ordinary forks and knives at meals. The food is not served in rations; each has as much as he desires. A good many of the men work on the grounds, their hours being from seven to eleven a.m., and three to five p.m., thus avoiding the hottest part of the day. Very few assist in the workshops. I did not notice many of the females employed, although a good deal of sewing is stated to be done by them. In the winter there are promiscuous dances (males and females together) twice a week. Entertainments by the magic-lantern are frequent. There are also a bowling alley, quoits, ball, billiard and bagatelle tables, chess, dominoes, draughts, and backgammon. There is a small zoological collection, including the bison, black bear, monkeys, foxes, cranes, &c.; and in this connection I must not omit to notice the very fine pack of hounds and hunter belonging to the physician.

A large number of both sexes take walking exercise in the grounds; but as there are no airing-courts, if violent and destructive, they are confined to their halls and rooms. There is a chapel, but no chaplain. It was stated that the patients belonged to a great many different sects, and that it was very difficult to get a clergyman who would not do mischief by his discourses and instructions; so it was thought that the best solution of the difficulty was to have none at all. Clergymen are, however, freely admitted to converse with those belonging to their own denomination; and a considerable party is sent down pretty regularly to church in the village.

Attendants.—Their wages range (with board) from 15 dols. to 28 dols. (45s. to 84s. at current rate of exchange) for females, and from 18 dols. to 33 dols. (54s. to 99s.) for males per month. Both males and females are permitted to meet together at night between 8 and 10 o'clock in the rotunda; and as this is the most central part of the building and is overlooked from the respective flats above, improprieties have not resulted from this much prized privilege. There are two night attendants, besides a watchman for the grounds and the exterior of the buildings.

The Department for Coloured People.—This is a most interesting portion of the establishment. The fine mansion-house in which they reside has only lately been acquired. It is situated just on the other side of the road which skirts the asylum grounds, is three storeys in height, and has a handsome portico in front. There are only nine inmates. The majority are cases of dementia; one intelligent looking creole was maniacal. Two were in seclusion. The furnishing and all the other arrangements were very good; and, in fact, the patients seemed to be fully as well cared for as their pale-faced brethren of the same class.*

NOTE.—It will be observed how powerfully the *race* feeling operates, inasmuch as a separate establishment with all its additional expenditure must needs be provided for nine coloured people rather than permit them to mix with the inmates of the general asylum, or even to give them separate wards in the same building. But with the exception of this repugnance to associate with them—very excusable when we remember the relative position of the two races, as master

* On remarking a somewhat singular looking cat in one of the rooms, I was told it was an African one—not inappropriately placed there!

and slave, so lately, in their near neighbourhood (Kentucky)—it must be admitted that all the arrangements for their care and treatment are on a most liberal scale. In short, the condition of this department, and indeed of the asylum as a whole, is highly creditable to all concerned with the management, and to the city of Cincinnati itself.

In connection with the coloured people, I received some interesting information from Dr. Rodman, Superintendent of one of the Kentucky Asylums, whom I was so fortunate as to meet along with the Superintendent of the other asylum in that State while visiting Longview. He stated that his experience among the insane of the coloured people in Kentucky had been very extensive, and that he had arrived at the following conclusions:—1st. That previous to the acquiring of their freedom there were more negroes insane than was generally supposed. They did not then readily come under public notice, as their masters usually kept them at home, if not absolutely unsafe, because they could be supported more cheaply there than in an institution. 2nd. There are proportionately more imbeciles and idiots amongst them than among the whites. During the existence of slavery, he said, imbeciles were easily overlooked, for the negro labourers on a plantation were employed, as a rule, at work of so simple a kind that, even though very deficient mentally, they could do it, and therefore little notice was taken of their feeble mental power. 3rd. Making full allowance for the additional number who have become known to the authorities owing to their former masters being no longer responsible for their maintenance, there has been a decided increase since the war—or rather, since obtaining their liberty. This he ascribed especially to the increased, and, to them, excessive exercise of their brains in seeking to provide for themselves and their families, and generally, in the exercise of their new rights as freedmen.

Legal Forms in Kentucky.—Dr. Rodman said that before a poor person—*i. e.*, one maintained at the public expense—can be confined in an asylum in this State, a writ *de lunatico inquirendo* must be issued and a jury impanelled, before whom the alleged lunatic is brought. Should it appear to the jury that the evidence submitted is not sufficient to establish insanity, they ask experts to examine the persons under inquiry, so as to assist them in coming to a conclusion. In the

case of those whose means are sufficient to support them, their relations can bring them to the asylum without a medical certificate, and the Superintendent can receive them, if convinced of their insanity. Dr. Rodman said that he generally insists on their being taken before a jury, though this is not required by the statute.

Restraint.—Referring to the use of mechanical restraint in American asylums, this gentleman said that in Kentucky they had a large number of desperate fellows who, when in their sound senses, were regardless of life, and in whom, in many cases, insanity intensified the worst features of their characters. He was convinced that, if they were not so restrained, homicides would be of not unfrequent occurrence.

GOVERNMENT HOSPITAL FOR THE INSANE, WASHINGTON.

Under the shelter of a covered "buggy," on a day of intense heat, after a three miles' drive from the Capitol, across the Potomac and up the steep incline on the other side—my sable driver, a freedman, meanwhile telling me in his child-like language about how much he liked his freedom, that now he had his mother staying with him, whom he had never before seen since he was a child, and that when he was a slave he had not "good clothes like these," pointing to the coarsest of coarse woollen trowsers, but had to wear sacking like what the potato bags are made of—we arrived at this institution. The site is an elevated one, and commands a wide and varied prospect—most interesting, perhaps, southward towards the city and Capitol, where the busy scenes on the river, ordnance experiments, launches, &c., must attract the notice and relieve the monotony of the secluded life of the inmates. "The ground plan of the main edifice has been appropriately denominated an echelon. It is a modification of what is known in this country as the Kirkbride or Trenton plan, and is thought to embrace peculiar advantages in respect to classification, light, and spontaneous elevation, and in presenting the broken outline of a castle or villa. The façade of the building is called the Collegiate Gothic style, and is thought to be appropriate and also highly effective in view of its plainness and the cheapness of the materials in which it can be represented."* The general effect of this style is unusual and somewhat striking, but it can scarcely lay claim to much architectural beauty. All the buildings are of brick.

* Annual Report for 1860.

The grounds comprise two hundred acres, and the Board of Management are in terms at present for acquiring about two hundred more, as they are anxious to be able to supply the institution with everything of farm produce. The soil is rich, "and affords, fresh and abundant, the luxuries of the garden, the farm, and the dairy." About forty-five acres are appropriated to the buildings, drives, walks, ornamental trees, and shrubbery. The river runs along one side of the grounds, without wall or fence intervening.

The management consists of a board of nine visitors, to which Dr. Nichols, the principal physician of the asylum, acts as secretary. This gentleman is also "Superintendent of Construction," and in this capacity makes a separate report (published along with that of the board) to the Secretary of the Interior, the asylum being immediately under the control of the supreme government. There are three resident qualified medical assistants, all of whom are married. Each of these gentlemen is attached to a department, and is responsible for it. In special cases he consults with Dr. Nichols, who also gives the tone to the general character of the treatment and discipline.

Dr. Nichols was from home, but I was courteously shown over the greater part of the establishment by one of his assistants.

The entrance hall is rather dull, and a hanging stair in its middle, unconnected on all sides, has a somewhat singular appearance. The galleries are central, as in the asylums already described, and are well lighted and cheerful. The bedrooms are of large size, but some contained two beds. The largest associated dormitories are for only six patients, and there are upwards of twenty with only four beds. Each hall has its own dining and day room; separate from it, at the end, are the *single* bath room and water closet, in an offshoot from the main building. The seclusion rooms, judging from the one of the range I was in on the male side, are large, well ventilated, and have each a fixed iron night-stool in the corner. The furnishing of the various apartments was generally good, in some parts very superior, more particularly in the "officers' quarters." For instance, in the dining-room of one of their halls I was shown a fine and complete dinner service. All the knives and forks in use are of an ordinary pattern; the edges, however, are not very sharp. In the alcoves of the galleries and elsewhere there were flowers in pots, some of which were in full bloom, and

looked very pretty; and even at the end of the hall for the excited class, there was a fine collection, protected, however, by a stout iron screen of trellis work. The halls themselves are lined with different woods, by which they are named. Thus there are the walnut, oak, ash, beech, sycamore, maple, poplar, cherry, cedar, chestnut, locust, birch, and spruce halls.

Patients.—The total number under treatment on 30th June, 1867, was 185 males, and 96 females—281. The majority are from the army and navy, but some are private, as the asylum is for the district of Columbia. The district cases are admitted on the certificates of two medical men, with the consent of the Physician-Superintendent. An order of admission by the Secretary of the Interior, granted on medical certificates, is given for those sent in from the public departments. All classes are received and retained, and there is consequently a large proportion of chronic incurables resident.

Some of the acute cases among the males were apparently rather violent, at least I inferred so from the noise in more than one of the seclusion rooms. As means of restraint, leather muffs are used for the males, and strait-jackets for the females. A man of colour was walking about quietly in the hall adjoining the strong rooms, with his arms firmly secured in stout leather muffs. He was stated to have been violent and excited for six months, and it was considered that it would be dangerous to attempt to dispense with the use of mechanical restraint in his case. They seemed tight about the wrists; but on remarking that, I was assured that they did not chafe the skin. I did not see the acute cases among the females.

From 25 to 30 per cent. of the males work on the farm, and this form of occupation is much esteemed as a remedial means. A few are employed in the tailor's and shoemaker's shops. There are three lecture nights in the week during the winter, and a lecture, exhibition, or festival is occasionally given in the summer. If they can secure the services of lecturers from the city they are very glad, but, if not, the medical assistants give an exposition in turn. One lectures on chemistry, with experiments; another gives views, &c., with the magic lantern; the third takes up another class of subjects. Such lectures as are most demonstrative are the most successful, and, as a rule, they are much liked by the patients. There are also occasional dances in the winter, but this form of amusement is not held in much estimation.

Regarding religious ordinances, I quote the last annual report as follows:—"On the first Sabbath of July, 1866, the plan, previously matured, went into effect of having the religious services in the chapel of the hospital, conducted in turn by six associate chaplains, representing the six leading denominations of the district. Each chaplain preached in the afternoon of every Sunday for two months in the year, and, as occasion required, attended the sick of his faith throughout the year, and the funerals of such as died and were buried in the hospital cemetery. Under this system the patients of all denominations are generally willing to attend all the services; much more willing than under any other system which we have tried. Under it each patient receives the same concession to his sectarian prejudices from others which he makes to them, and it has worked so well that it has been continued into the current year. It is the rule of the house that all patients who are able shall attend all chapel services."

Each of these gentlemen is paid 100 dollars (about £15 current exchange), for his services. There is a fine organ in the chapel.

Causes and results.—Dr. Nichols remarked a decided increase in the proportion of admissions from amongst the recruits during the latter years of the war than in the earlier periods, and he attributes this to the fact "that the latter accessions to the union armies include a larger proportion of men who are more readily affected by the exciting causes of insanity than were to be found during the first two years of the war." Last year "the deaths were eight and a half per cent. of the whole number under treatment, and thirty per cent. of the discharges, including deaths." The death-rate is stated to be above the average of previous years. In connection with the proximity of the river, I was interested to find that there had been only two suicides in it since the erection of the asylum.

The cures are estimated on the *discharges*, thus:—"The recoveries were sixty-six per cent. of the discharges, and forty-six per cent. of the discharges and deaths."

In his last annual report, Dr. Nichols enters into the legal and medical questions affecting dipsomaniacs, the subject being suggested by the admission of an unusually large number of cases of that kind during the year. In the course of his remarks, he says—"In relation to confirmed inebriates, we believe the desideratum of this particular time is a public judgment distinctly expressed in the State constitution and

laws, and expounded and enforced by the courts, that they are dangerous to themselves and others, and may and should be legally subjected to prolonged restraint, both for the protection of society and for their own protection and reformation." But he afterwards adds, "A more efficient system of reformatory restraint requires the authority of laws that have hitherto been enacted by one State only, and a court of that State has since decided that they are unconstitutional."

I regretted that I did not see the lodges for the coloured people, which are apart from each other, on the grounds at some distance from the main building.

THE MARYLAND HOSPITAL FOR THE INSANE, BALTIMORE.

This, though regarded as the main institution for the insane in the State of Maryland, only accommodates 130 patients; as many more are in Mount Hope asylum for Roman Catholics, in the neighbourhood of Baltimore. The Jews have a small but well managed establishment, for members of their own persuasion, close to the principal hospital, and about 300 are confined in the almshouse, where, it was stated, the treatment is *far behind* that of the other asylums. A new hospital is, however, in course of erection for 500 patients, to which, when completed, it is intended that all the insane poor in the State shall be sent; and the Maryland Hospital will then be retained for private patients alone.

This asylum is a large brick building, and occupies an elevated site in the eastern part of the city of Baltimore. There is a good view, both of the city and of a fine district of country around, to be had from the tower, and also partially from the upper flat of the establishment, but there is none from the under flat, which is below the level of the ground in front. Thirty-six acres of land are attached, and laid out, for the most part, as pleasure grounds. There are airing yards, but they are small, cheerless, and surrounded by high walls. All the galleries are narrow and ill lighted. So dark were they on the basement storey that though the day was one of unclouded brightness, at some points patients seated by the walls could not be readily seen. These lower galleries are floored with brick, and were admitted to be damp. Here, for the first and only time in American asylums, I found an approach to the general dining-room arrangement, there being a room for the males and a corresponding one for the females, each capable of holding about thirty, in which patients from several galleries, but not

from all, meet for meals. Besides the general visitors' room, there is a small one at the end of each hall, where the inmates can be seen more privately. The seclusion rooms are provided with two doors, an outer grated one, and an inner one of an ordinary kind. Many of the bed-rooms have their windows protected on the inside by strong iron stanchions. In the day-rooms for the more excited, the seats are fixtures along the walls. There is a lack of engravings, flowers, &c., though there are a few prints in the rooms and halls of the quieter class. The heating is by the circulation of hot water in pipes, ugly piles of which, in coils, were exposed in the centre of some of the rooms, and on the sides of the galleries.

Very many of the patients in the lower flats were barefooted; some had shoes on without stockings, and their dress generally was slovenly. One man was walking about quietly with his arms secured in leather muffs; and a woman was in seclusion with a strait-waistcoat on. I passed another room in which there was a violent patient; but, as the door was not opened, I did not see his condition.

A few, but not many patients are employed on the grounds, and two or three work at tailoring and in the engine-house. In the winter there are occasional dance parties; no lectures are given. Croquet is the only out-door game. No patient is allowed to walk about the grounds without an attendant.

Inebriates are admitted freely; and I was assured by Dr. Stewart, the medical assistant, that cases of mere drunkenness are sometimes sent in. For such cases, an application by a citizen of Baltimore, who must become surety for the payment of the board, and a medical certificate, in the following form, are required to procure admission:—

[MEDICAL CERTIFICATE.]

—, 186—.

I hereby certify that — is *non compos mentis* from intemperance, and ought to be placed in an Hospital for the Insane.

—, Physician.

Physician's P.O. Address.

The Board of Management consists of thirty-three members, representing the various counties of the state and the City of Baltimore, who elect from themselves a small executive committee. The President of the Board *must* be a medical graduate, and he receives a salary for attending to the interests of the institution. The Medical-Superintendent has the special charge of the asylum; but "in all unusual events

he must consult the president or the executive committee." The regulations for the assistant-physician require him to "preside at the table of the best class of patients in the male department;" and further, "he shall be a married man, and when visiting the females he must always be accompanied by a proper female attendant."

THE PENNSYLVANIA HOSPITAL FOR THE INSANE.

This institution is situated in the western suburbs of Philadelphia, and is conveniently reached by the street cars which run to within a few yards of the gate of the hospital. The male and female departments are entirely separate; each has its own grounds, and is enclosed by a special wall, about nine feet in height, a "creek,"—as the small streams are called—running between on neutral ground. The domestic arrangements are also independent of each other, all that they have in common being the bake-house.

The female division, much the older of the two, is three storeys in height, and consists of a principal building about three hundred feet in length, with wings at the extremities, which recede to a considerable distance, and also advance beyond the line of the main front. On each side of the wings, at a little distance, are pavilions for the museums and reading-rooms. A dome surmounts the centre of the edifice, and there is a belvedere over each wing at its junction with the central block. A flight of steps leads up to the portico and colonnade at the chief entrance. Just opposite it is a fine *jet d'eau* in an ornamental basin. The groves around are very beautiful, but interfere much with the view from the halls and day-rooms. The pleasure grounds and gardens, inclusive of the deer park, amount to forty-one acres. Fifty acres are attached to the male hospital.

Dr. Kirkbride, the "physician in chief and superintendent," was from home, but I was courteously shown over both departments by the assistant-physicians.

Here again we have the central halls or corridors, with rooms and alcoves on either side. The halls are broad, lofty, and well lighted. Connected with each is the special dining-room, with the "dumb waiter" at the end; there is no general dining-hall. The bedrooms are mostly single; a few have two beds. The male department, built about eight years since, has the larger halls and rooms. To the left, as you enter, is the lecture-room, seated for nearly a hundred, the

backs of the seats being reversible like those in American railway cars, so as to permit of the spectators looking in the opposite direction, when a demonstration with the magic lantern is given. The heating of the new building is by steam, the pipes being within the walls. The hot air is admitted below, and the extraction openings are near the ceiling. A fan has been erected in connection with the great air-ducts (through which we walked), but Dr. Jones, who has special charge of this department, said that it is not used, *as the ventilation is quite sufficient without it*. This gentleman attached much importance to the downward ventilation of the water-closets, which is effected by an arrangement similar to what I have described in connection with other institutions.

The furnishing is good throughout, in some parts superb statuary, engravings, &c., adding to the amenities of the wards. In the female side, on the main staircase, is West's celebrated painting of "Christ healing the sick," originally presented by the artist to the sick hospital, but afterwards removed to the asylum.

Two museums are connected with each department—a geological and a zoological one; the collections are good, extensive, and in excellent order. The gentlemen have two reading-rooms, one for newspapers, the others for books and journals; the ladies have also a reading-room for themselves. These museums and reading-rooms, being a little way from the main building, are pleasant places of resort for the patients when taking exercise in the grounds. Besides the larger libraries belonging to the reading-rooms, I observed in many of the parlours small book-cases filled with books of general interest.

Employment.—The female patients sew and knit a good deal; not much work is done by the males, though facilities are offered for mechanical occupation in the workshops. It is, however, to be kept in mind, in connection with the latter observation, that the great majority of the inmates belong to the wealthier classes, and have not been trained to manual labour. Only forty are free patients, that is, have been admitted without payment on the recommendation of those who have subscribed 5000 dols. (£750 current exchange) towards the building or furnishing of the asylum, subject to the selection of the directors from amongst those recommended, who endeavour to choose those most suited in education, habits, and manners to mingle with the society of the house. The gentlemen spend much of their time at the billiard table,

reading, walking, &c. A number of the ladies play billiards, a few having learned the game before admission at private tables; but the majority have been taught in the institution. They have a private billiard room in the grounds containing two billiard tables, in addition to which there is a parlour one indoors for their special use. In the pavilion billiard room, standing out prominently, there is a printed list of games, nearly a dozen in number, in which the ladies engage from time to time, according as they feel disposed. Besides these, they have a gymnasium—a fine hall in which they practice light gymnastics with wooden dumb-bells and rings on two nights of the week. On an average, about thirty take part in the gymnastic class, the exercises being accompanied by music. On the floor of the gymnasium outlines of feet are painted to indicate the various positions in which the ladies are to stand in different movements. But in connection with the means of occupation, a short extract from Dr. Kirkbride's last annual report will give the best idea of the system carried out:—"As usual the season was of nine months' duration, and at the department for females every evening during that period was occupied. Three evenings were devoted to lectures, concerts, or the exhibition of dissolving views, always with music in the lecture room; two to gymnastic exercises in the hall put up for that purpose; one to reading the Bible and sacred music in the lecture room; and one to tea parties in the officers' departments in the centre building—the number present at these last being limited only by the capacities of the tables. At the department for males, the regular course is the same, with the exception that in place of the light gymnastic exercises and the tea parties, the patients on these evenings use the fine billiard tables, the ten-pin alleys, or the various other games that are provided in the wards or in close proximity to them." Regarding the tea parties he says, "No ward has been omitted from its regular turn; every one has sent a large majority of its inmates; while from several there has often been hardly a single patient absent. All the officers resident at the hospital, with the ladies of their families, are generally in attendance, and nothing material has ever occurred to mar the satisfaction of those who have participated in these very pleasant and useful entertainments." The lectures are an hour in length. The medical officer admitted that only a small proportion of the patients present could understand them.

Restraint and Seclusion.—The camisole is occasionally used for violent and destructive females; similar cases among the men wear leather wristlets with belts round the body, to which the wristbands are fixed, leaving the fingers free. It was stated that not above one per cent. of the men are so restrained. Two or three of the ladies were in seclusion at my visit whom I did not see, but the others among the excited class who were in the day-rooms or walking about in the halls were tolerably quiet, and their clothing was in good order. The locked bed is not in use; but I was informed that in some cases where there appeared to be a risk of patients exhausting themselves by constantly maintaining the erect posture, straps are placed across the bed so as to enforce the horizontal position, while freedom of movement from side to side is not restricted.

Medicinal Treatment.—About a third of the patients take medicines, mostly tonics and sedatives. Baths are not given for longer than half an hour. Dr. Jones said that he had been prescribing Calabar bean lately in certain cases resulting from sunstroke, but his observations had been too few to warrant conclusions.

Hours, &c.—The gentlemen get up at 5 a.m. and breakfast at 6; I have not noted the hours for the ladies. Ordinary knives and forks are used at table, but the edge of the knives is not very keen.

Attendants.—The females especially are a superior class; they have 12 dols. per month and board (£2 16s. current exchange). Both males and females are allowed an afternoon every fortnight and every third Sabbath to themselves.

Forms of Admission.—One certificate of insanity from a respectable graduate in medicine, in the simplest form, without evidences, with an application from a near relative or friend, is sufficient warrant for the reception of a patient into the asylum. Dr. Kirkbride makes special reference to this ease of committal in his last report: he says, "After more than thirty years' experience among the insane, and with a personal knowledge of considerably more than five thousand patients, I am glad to be able to assure those who have fears to the contrary that, with a careful scrutiny, I have not discerned anything even in cases of doubtful insanity, to make me believe that the friends of the patients have been actuated by improper motives."

NOTE.—This institution, though called the "Pennsylvania

Hospital for the Insane," is very far from accommodating the great body of the lunatics in the State. There is another asylum at Harrisburg, which is stated to be crowded, and very many are still in the almshouses and prisons, besides those detained in private houses. Elsewhere, in the course of my tour, I was informed on good authority, that the provisions for the care and treatment of the inmates of these places is far from being satisfactory or creditable to so old and wealthy a State as Pennsylvania, and contrast very strongly with the admirable arrangements of the establishment above described.

BLOOMINGDALE ASYLUM FOR THE INSANE, NEW YORK.

This institution is for the wealthier classes, though formerly a small proportion of the inmates consisted of persons reduced in circumstances, whose previous social position, education, and habits corresponded with those of the patients generally, and who were admitted at reduced rates of board. In consequence of the increased cost of maintenance during late years, this class has latterly been almost entirely excluded; though Dr. Brown, the Physician-Superintendent, has been urging that provision should be made for them in the new asylum about to be built.

The main building was erected about fifty years since, and at that time the site was considered by many to be too remote from the city, but in consequence of the rapid growth of the latter and the extension of the avenues in the near neighbourhood, the privacy of the inmates cannot now be sufficiently maintained: hence the determination of the directors to remove the asylum to a more suitable position.

The grounds, forty acres in extent, are finely wooded, so much so, in fact, as to interfere considerably with the prospect which the admirable site would otherwise command. The female wing is of recent construction, but the central block, which is four storeys in height, as already said, is old. The general plan of the interior being the same as that of the asylums already described, it is not necessary to describe it particularly. The wards are elegantly furnished, and their attractiveness is further increased by fine collections of flowers at the ends of the halls. Airing courts are attached (unlike several of the American asylums visited), and there is a verandah in the centre of the male one.

There are 170 patients resident. Belonging as they do to

the upper ranks, little or no work is done, except sewing, knitting, and such like by the ladies. There is a weekly lecture by Dr. Brown or his assistant, the subject varying; sometimes chemistry with experiments, or natural history furnishes the illustrations, or, it may be, a demonstration with the magic lantern. The meetings are held in the chapel, the seats in which are reversible as in the Philadelphia asylum. There are also occasional dances, at which the ladies and gentlemen meet together; and it happens sometimes that friendships between the sexes are thereby formed. The ladies have a special billiard table.

The more excited class have each a separate department at a little distance from the main buildings. The windows of the male one are protected inside by vertical strong iron stanchions; on some of the staircase windows the stanchions are horizontal. I noticed one locked box bed, the lid of which, consisting of wooden spars, was arched, instead of being flat and level with the margin of the bedstead, as I had seen in other asylums.

A violent male patient, suffering from recurrent mania, was secluded with a strait-waistcoat on; another was walking about the corridor with his arms secured by the same means; a third was restrained by "muffs." In rare cases patients are bound down to their beds by straps around the ankles, which are fixed to the bottom of bedsteads, and by others around or across the body—I am not sure which.

This class, as also, of course, all the others, were clean in their persons, tidy in their dress, and their apartments were in excellent order.

Even in these separate buildings, ordinary knives and forks are supplied to the patients who are able to sit at table. Though there has been a remarkable immunity from attempts at suicide and homicide, considering the facilities presented by the use of knives with cutting edges throughout, yet one or two occurrences have indicated the danger connected with this practice. Thus, a gentleman (lately removed to Morningside asylum in this country) suddenly jumped up without warning, and plunged his knife into the patient next him, the blade entering at the back part of the vertex of the head, and emerging at the nape of the neck. Dr. Brown mentioned another case which had come under his notice in an asylum, where a patient who was previously considered perfectly safe, and was in the habit of assisting the attendant to serve dinner, one day seized the carving-knife, and ripped up her

own abdomen, from which she died. The attendant, who accompanied me through the wards for the excited class, told me that on one occasion a patient seized the carving knife, and was about to thrust it into his (the attendant's) person, when he succeeded in wresting it from him.

Forms of Admission.—"In accordance with the revised statutes of this State, it is necessary, before a patient can be admitted into the Bloomingdale asylum, that a lunacy warrant from any justice of the peace, or police magistrate of this city, issued upon the evidence of two reputable physicians as to the alleged facts of insanity, be procured; and also a permit from one of the asylum committee, &c."

Management.—There is one Board of Management for the New York Sick Hospital and this institution, who appoint an asylum committee of six members to attend to its interests. The reports of the two establishments are published together.

NEW YORK CITY LUNATIC ASYLUM.

The City Penitentiary, the alms-house, the hospital, and the workhouse, along with the lunatic asylum, are all situated within a few yards of each other on Blackwell's Island in East river, the channel communicating with Long Island Sound, which separates Brooklyn from New York proper, and occupy the entire island. An immense population has consequently been crowded into a small space; and this, besides the gross faults in management, to some of which I shall refer in connection with the asylum, has probably contributed largely to the spread of the severe epidemics of disease, with which all these institutions have, from time to time, been visited. Whenever any of the epidemic contagious disorders appears in one establishment, it almost invariably visits the others. Generally it originates in the workhouse. Thus, four years ago, typhus fever extended to the asylum, when a large number of patients died from it, besides some officials, including the physician-superintendent; and two years since, seventy patients perished from cholera. Scurvy has also been of frequent occurrence amongst the inmates.

The asylum has long been over-crowded. This will be very evident from the statement in the last annual report of Dr. Parsons, the energetic superintendent, who, let me say, in that report, faithfully brings many of the leading defects of the arrangements under the notice of the board of directors—

that, on the 31st December, 1867, of the 895 patients in the asylum, 304 slept on the floor, there being only 591 bedsteads in the wards; and I was convinced that there is not sufficient room even for these, as they are much too near each other, and rows of them occupy the centre of the large dormitories where sixty sleep together, besides those placed in the usual way along the side walls.

Many of the bed-rooms are small and dark, having no windows, and are dependent for light and air on small openings into the corridors. I was in several which had a close, urinous odour. In a large proportion two patients sleep together; and as they contain only about seven hundred cubic feet, it is clear that the atmosphere must become oppressive during the night, more especially in hot weather, such as at my visit, when the thermometer was standing at 100° Fahrenheit in the shade. There had been but few mishaps from this arrangement, but it was admitted that there had been a homicide in a bed-room in the course of last year, and one also in the year before.

The violent patients are kept apart from the main body in a separate building, where the males are located in the low flat, and the females above. Here many of both sexes were walking up and down, highly excited, in the narrow corridors adjoining their bed-rooms and seclusion rooms; several were restrained in strait-waistcoats, or by leather wristlets. A few were secluded. Bed straps are used, it was said, in exceptional cases of violence—that is, such patients are tied down to their bedsteads. A large proportion are constantly confined in these galleries and rooms, there being no airing-courts in which the excited class can get out-door exercise; some, however, walk in the general grounds of the establishment.

Mechanical restraint was not confined to the department for the excited class. In going through the main building I observed a man in one of the corridors tied to his seat by a rope. When I spoke of his condition, it was said that he was subject to erysipelas of the leg and that this plan had been adopted to restrain his movements that the limb might get rest. It unfortunately, however, failed to accomplish the end in view, at least if the horizontal posture were intended, as he could get up off the seat, and he was sitting when we passed.

Much disorder also prevailed in a number of the wards of this part of the establishment, many of the patients being

stretched on the floor of the halls, some excited, others in a listless, moody, or apathetic state. Their position, however, seemed very much a matter of necessity, as there was apparently not a seat for each, had they been all anxious to sit down at the same time. Both there and in the "Separates" a large number were barefooted, and their clothing was untidy and ragged in the last degree. I noticed a man in one of the halls nearly in a state of nudity,—his breast uncovered, his feet, legs, and forearms bare, and the clothing he had on hanging in tatters about his body, thighs, and upper arms. No remark was made about his condition, and it did not seem to attract attention as in any way extraordinary.

As I have said, great excitement prevailed, more especially in the wards for the acute and violent cases. Never, in fact, have I visited any institution for the insane where the noise and confusion were so bewildering, nor where I experienced the same feeling of relief on leaving.

I inquired particularly regarding the views and experience of the officials in connection with the proximity of the river. It was urged that it effectually prevented elopements; but, on the other hand, suicides by drowning were admitted to be rather frequent. There had been four between the beginning of the year and the date of my visit (26th June); and in this it was considered that they had been unusually fortunate.

A considerable amount of work is done by the patients. Thus, from the official return for 25th June, it appeared that of the 1,129 patients resident 194 had been employed four, five, or six hours, for the most part, on the grounds in building sea wall, &c.; and besides these 139 had done light work.

The proportion of attendants is one to thirty patients. If the proportion were greater, it was said, the accommodation for the insane would be encroached on still more, and it was little enough already. The wages per month of the males are 32 dollars (£4 16s., current exchange); females, 16 dollars (£2 8s.); these sums being, of course, in addition to board.

Besides the main building and the separate one for the excited class, there are a number of pavilions under the same general management; one being for idiots, one for insane epileptics, and another for those considered sane, and one for sane paralytics. The patients there occupy the same wards night and day, except that they dine in a separate room attached to each pavilion. I was informed that in high tide the water from the river rose to the under surface of the flooring of the pavilions.

Through the representations of Dr. Parsons, in the course of last year, a gymnastic hall had been erected, which was proving a valuable addition to the institution. Classes from various galleries in the asylum besides the pavilions had been formed, and each in its turn practised light gymnastics, the performances being usually accompanied by music. Dr. Parsons, in his report, speaks in the highest terms of the usefulness of this form of employment in furnishing patients, *especially females*, with healthful exercise. Concerts, views with magic lantern, dances, &c., also contribute to their amusement and instruction.

Another important improvement introduced at the physician's instance during last year is a more liberal and varied dietary. The scale for two days will show its character.

TUESDAY.

BREAKFAST.—Coffee or tea, milk and sugar, boiled beans, bread.

DINNER.—Irish stew, bread, baked Indian, rice, or bread pudding.

SUPPER.—Tea, milk and sugar, bread and butter.

SATURDAY.

BREAKFAST.—Coffee or tea, milk and sugar, hashed meat well seasoned, bread.

DINNER.—Boiled beef, slightly corned, with boiled cabbage or turnips, bread.

SUPPER.—Tea, milk and sugar, bread and butter.

“The coffee is one-fourth pure coffee and three-fourths rye; the ration of the mixture is one-fifth of an ounce. The ration of milk is two ounces at breakfast and two ounces at supper. The ration of hominy, of mush, and of oatmeal is two ounces. The ration of beef and mutton is twelve ounces of the raw meat, which will make about half that amount when cooked and freed from the bone, &c.”

The arrangement for religious exercises will be understood from the following extract from the last report. “Religious services have been regularly held throughout the year on Thursday of each week and on the first Sunday of each month by the Rev. Edward Cowley; on the second and fifth Sunday, by the Rev. Father Gelinas; and on the remaining Sundays, by the Rev. Zetus Searle with the assistance of clerical and lay brethren from the city.”

The management of the institution is by the Board of Commissioners of public charities and correction, consisting of four members.* Dr. Parsons has three assistants, besides whom there is a clerk and an apothecary.

* Outside the asylum I heard this Board most unfavourably spoken of; and since my return I noticed that the Rev. Dr. Beecher has been denouncing in the strongest terms the flagrant misrule, the peculation, the jobbery, and the prostitution of justice by the civic rulers of New York generally.

THE NEW YORK STATE LUNATIC ASYLUM.

The site of this asylum is an elevated plain about a mile from the beautiful town of Utica, on the north bank of the Mohawk river. It commands fine views of the surrounding country, especially northward, of the Mohawk valley and, in the distance, the range of hills which divides the waters flowing into lake Ontario from the tributaries of the Hudson. The grounds in front are well wooded, and the trees do not interfere with the prospect to be obtained from the institution. The asylum itself has a very imposing appearance on approaching it from the lodge, due to its situation, its extended front—a vast block four storeys in height, with a central building a storey higher, in front of which is a portico, colonnade and flight of steps, and above, a dome—as well as the solidity and, at the same time, somewhat venerable aspect of the mountain limestone of which it is built.

In general plan it does not differ materially from some of the insane hospitals already described, for instance, the Michigan one, except that at Utica the receding wings are joined by a cross building at the distance of about a hundred yards—it may be somewhat more or less—from the main front. Behind and parallel with this connecting block, at a shorter distance, is the range of workshops.

The interior arrangements of the wards are also similar to the others, except that there are no day-rooms. Dr. Gray, the Physician-Superintendent, who courteously showed me over, said he had done away with them, as he thinks that congregating a number of patients into one room has a tendency to prevent individuality of character from being developed, which he seeks to promote as much as possible. In lieu of day-rooms they have the alcoves and the seats in the halls, besides which no objection is made to their sitting in their bedrooms, should they wish it, provided they do not put them into disorder.

The alcoves are not so cheerful as they might be, especially in the lower flats; but it is intended to convert the existing into bow windows, which will also have an improving architectural effect in relieving the sameness of the aspect of the frontage between the central building and the extremities. Here, also, there are separate dining-rooms for each hall, with food elevators and cupboards at the end of the rooms. The knives and forks are like those in ordinary domestic use. There is no general bath-room. The baths are for the most part of enamelled iron. Two porcelain ones have just been

ordered from England. There is a large proportion of single bedrooms; the dormitories are for from five to twelve patients; the original day-rooms have been turned into dormitories.

The average number of insane inmates resident during last year was 610. The asylum is over-crowded, and it has been found necessary to refuse many patients, both public and private. Two new asylums of large size are in course of erection in the State, one of which at Ovid is nearly ready for being occupied, so that there is an early prospect of the pressure on the Utica establishment being diminished.

Classification.—There are twelve classes of males and as many of females, each having its distinctive character arranged according to the mental condition of the patients, their habits and manners. On the under flat, on the same level as the offices, the more particular cases are located in their respective halls—such cases as require most attention amongst the convalescents, the demented, and the maniacal, this arrangement facilitating frequent inspection by the medical officers. There are no hospital wards. Dr. Gray purposes having a hospital without calling it by that name, as elsewhere he had noticed that a depressing mental effect and an untoward influence on the bodily ailment were not infrequently exerted on sick patients when their maladies were considered so serious as to require removal to the *hospital*.

Treatment.—On an average about forty per cent. are under medical treatment, including only those who are receiving prolonged medication, stimulants, tonics, &c. Persons suffering from chronic melancholia are permitted to do very much what they choose, within the bounds, of course, of their own safety and that of others, for a long time at first—six months or a year, perhaps,—attention being directed principally to the promotion of their nutrition. When their physical state improves, then, and not till then, they are asked to occupy their attention in work, &c. Dr. Gray holds that the appearance of the lips in these cases is a valuable indication of the general condition. There is usually, he says, a purplish line along the margin, just where the mucous membrane merges into the common integument, indicative of sluggishness of the circulation. When nutrition is progressing favourably, this line gradually fades, the lips become redder, the capillary vessels are more clearly defined, and, at the same time, there is returning activity of the cerebral circulation. He pointed out two or three cases of this kind in females, where the condition of the lips, viewed in connec-

tion with the mental state, certainly seemed to support this opinion.

Besides the general grounds for exercise there are large airing-yards for both sexes, the female one being the best appointed. There was, however, a deficiency of seats and especially verandahs, though the benches without backs under the trees were, to a certain extent, protected from the sun by the foliage.

About twenty-five per cent. of the males work on the grounds of the establishment, and a few are employed in the work shops. There are two or three small rooms where the females meet for sewing, but there is no general work-room.

Theatrical entertainments are the favourite means of amusing the patients. Their usefulness was spoken of in the highest terms. The stage in the hall of the institution is just like that of an ordinary theatre.

Restraint.—The strait-waistcoat is sometimes used for violent cases. Where there is a risk of exhaustion by excessive exercise, patients are locked in box beds, the sides and cover of which are made of wooden spars, with wide interstices, to permit of a free circulation of air round the persons of the enclosed. Bed straps are not used; but sometimes patients are fixed to their chairs by (I think it was said) leather belts.

Dr. Gray remarked that, as an experiment, in the beginning of this year, he gave instructions that mechanical restraint in all forms should be abolished, but that he found it necessary to return to its use, as he was satisfied that some patients suffering from acute mania would otherwise have died from sheer exhaustion, due to the constant maintenance of the erect posture and their unceasing exertions.

In this connection, I may mention that in many of the halls the chairs are fixed to the floor in such a way that a person sitting in one can make it rest on its two fore legs, or on the front and back one on either side, but not on the hind legs alone. The object of this is to preserve the walls from being destroyed through the American practice of lolling backwards with the legs hanging, or the heels resting on some support in front, such as another chair.

Causes.—Not many cases resident have been produced by sunstroke. A considerable number are the result of self-abuse, which in the experience of the physicians is not half so common in females as in males. Dr. Gray spoke of several

cases of exalted religious fervour associated with, and he considered due to, this vile habit, which had been lately or were still under his care. In several women insanity was ascribed to procured abortion. I shall quote a few striking details on this point from Dr. Gray's annual report:—"One woman told me, and the statement was verified by her husband, that seven successful abortions were procured on her by one of her female friends—and both of these women were highly respectable persons and members of the church. When in broken health and after failure in the eighth attempt she applied to a physician, he informed her of the criminality of the act, its dire consequences to health, and advised her against the continuance of such a practice. She subsequently, however, obtained the services of a charlatan, who succeeded in inducing abortion; and, some months later, this woman was admitted into the asylum in wretched health and suffering from melancholia, which her pastor, ignorant of her true history, attributed to religious excitement.

"A minister recently informed me that, in his congregation in a country village, one of the principal women approached his wife with a proposition that she should destroy her prospective offspring, declaring that she thought it right to do so, and mentioned others who resorted to the practice, rather than be troubled with children."

Much quietude, order, and contentment, prevailed throughout the various wards. Little excitement was manifest among the acute cases; they were also clean in their persons, and, with a few exceptions, tidy in their dress.

The bare cost of maintenance of each patient, exclusive of the proportion for repairs and salaries, is four dollars (12s. current exchange) per week.

Attendants.—The proportion of attendants to patients is one to nine males, and one to six females. There are, also, three supervisors on each flat, who, in addition to the general charge of their departments, get the medicines from the dispensary thrice daily, in little earthenware dishes (on each of which the patient's name is marked on the inside, near the top, instead of on the outside, as in most of the other institutions visited), and give it to those for whom it is ordered with their own hands. Besides the different grades of attendants there is a matron.

Ventilation, &c.—Great attention has been given to the ventilation and heating of the establishment. Dr. Gray explained very fully the system in operation, and walked with me alongside of the main air ducts in the basement. These passages

were formed a few years since at great expense, as they were constructed long after the erection of the asylum. At first, it was stated, they had not been very successful, as the distribution of the air was irregular, producing unpleasant currents at various points. An English engineer, who was a patient, had, on his recovery, suggested that they should make a free, continuous opening along the ridge of the roof of the entire institution, which was done, and since then all their difficulties have been surmounted. The capacity of the entire exit openings is about twice greater than that of the sum of the main air channels along which the air is forced by the fan, and in this arrangement, it is held, lies, for the most part, the secret of success. To a certain extent, however, it was considered to depend on the level of the admission openings. In the first instance the fresh air, whether heated or not, was admitted below; but it was found that upward currents were very distinctly perceptible. Afterwards it was introduced above, and since that change its distribution has been far more equable. When the working of the system was tested after its completion, they found that they could so thoroughly displace the cold air that the temperature was actually six degrees higher *below* than at the ceiling. The observations were then prolonged over a number of weeks, and had been made with great care. A number of thermometers were fixed at regular intervals between the floor and the ceiling, on poles, which were placed in various wards, and the record of the temperature in each was noted at fixed times.

The ventilation was tested in my presence in one of the halls, by means of the anemometer, as well as by the hand, and the deviation of a handkerchief. A distinct outgoing current existed at the floor opening, and a strong inward one was observable above.

During the year, on an average, 150 cubic feet per minute, night and day, are forced in for each person, assuming 700 as the average population. Irrespective of heating, the cost of coal for the fans is about a penny a day for each inmate. The air is heated by passing over steam coils.

A very marked improvement has been observed in the sanitary condition of the institution, since the introduction of the existing mode of heating and ventilation, as the inmates have enjoyed an almost complete immunity from erysipelas, typhus and typhoid fever, and kindred diseases, which were previously, owing, it is believed, to the crowded state of the asylum, of not infrequent occurrence. And it had even told on the

aspect of the attendants, the ruddy cheek having taken the place of the blanched hospital one; besides which there has been a freshness in the clothing worn by them, which was not noticeable previously.

It was stated that this system of ventilation and heating is so much approved that it has been introduced into several other institutions, and also into the buildings of the Capitol in Washington.

Dismissal of Chronic Cases.—From forty to sixty cases are annually returned to their friends when the Medical Superintendent considers that they are not dangerous, in order to provide room for new patients. No one can be removed without his sanction. Though it was said that nothing unpleasant had come to the knowledge of the officials with respect to these discharged lunatics, it would be too much to infer that their condition is therefore satisfactory, as it does not appear that there is any regular inspection or inquiry made regarding them at their homes. A considerable number are also transferred to the county poor-houses every year, and the character of their treatment there will be understood from the remarks in the note which I shall add to the description of this asylum.

Note.—The accommodation for the insane poor in the State of New York has hitherto been exceedingly defective, as the asylum at Utica cannot accommodate a third part of the entire number. Those who cannot be admitted into that institution, besides the chronic cases dismissed from it, are, for the most part, in the county poor-houses. From time to time their disgraceful treatment in these establishments attracted public attention, and four years ago the late Dr. Willard was appointed to collect information regarding the state of the insane collected in them, and to report to the Speaker of the Assembly. This gentleman's report was published in 1865, and, after some delay, orders were given for the erection of two large asylums, to which the cases in the poor-houses should be transferred. One of these, near Ovid, is for a thousand cases, and, as already mentioned, at the time of my visit was nearly finished.

I am indebted to the attention of a medical friend for a copy of the report, and assuredly many of the details recorded in its pages are quite harrowing. In fact they could scarcely be credited, were it not that the authority on which the statements are made is unquestionable. No doubt it will occur to many, and it must be admitted, that the revelations in the

Lancet about three years since regarding the state of a number of the workhouse hospitals in this country, especially in the metropolis, were highly discreditable; but bad though they were, in their case the evils exposed, affected, with but few exceptions, persons of sound mind, who, to a certain extent, could protect themselves, instead of the helpless insane; and besides, the worst of the conditions have been far excelled in neglect and cruelty by most of those so earnestly, and, it is pleasing to add, successfully, attacked by Dr. Willard.

However, reference to this painful subject might have been omitted altogether, seeing that the evils complained of are about to be remedied, had it not been that I was assured by several medical gentlemen connected with asylums in different parts of the country that the condition of the insane in the poor-houses of many other States of the Union is in no degree better than what it has hitherto been in New York State; and I cannot help thinking that the more widely this fact is known the greater the likelihood of public feeling being aroused in these districts, in the cause of justice and humanity to their unfortunate brethren.

On this account, then, I make the following quotations, which, it is right to state, are, perhaps, the most striking, from a host of details of a similar nature in the report, merely premising that it will be evident that Dr. Willard's standard of excellence in asylums was not too high when he says, regarding the New York pauper one, "The City and County of New York, among their great public charities, maintain a large and well-conducted asylum for the insane on Blackwell's Island."

The quotations, let it be clearly understood, have reference only to the insane in these establishments:—

ALBANAY COUNTY POOR-HOUSE.—"The asylum was built to accommodate thirty-one lunatics. There are in confinement at the present time in this space, designed only for *thirty one, one hundred and three*. Dr. J. L. Boulwane, the alms-house physician, had reported, 'We are now compelled to crowd from three to five of these creatures, who are in the greatest state of helplessness and dependence, in one room, also obliged to use some of the small, damp, air-tight cells, which are below ground, as lodging-rooms, whose aerial capacity was never more than barely sufficient to sustain the health of one individual.'"

BROOME COUNTY POOR-HOUSE.—“*Whipping is seldom resorted to.*”

COLUMBIA COUNTY POOR-HOUSE.—The great majority are noted as filthy. “Twelve sleep on straw without bedsteads. The straw is changed once or twice a week. None had stockings during the winter.”

CORTLAND COUNTY.—“The sexes are not kept entirely separated, and male attendants are employed to care for female insane.”

DELAWARE COUNTY.—The report, after describing the wretched cells, goes on to say, “The sufferings of these unfortunates, from whom the air and light of heaven are shut out, would form a dark chapter of human misery, could it be written.”

MADISON COUNTY.—“Fifteen out of twenty-five in the poor-house are filthy in their habits. The only care they receive is from the hands of incompetent paupers. Those confined in the cells are extremely filthy, most of them not using vessels, and their excrements are mixed with the straw on which they lie. Eighteen sleep on straw without bed or bedding. Their straw is changed only once in a week; and these lunatics, with their ‘bodies besmeared with their own excrements, not allowed to come daily to the open air, eating in the same filthy apartments, are not washed from one year’s end to another.’ The cells in which they are confined are only four by six feet, with a ceiling of seven feet, and open into a hall, so that they can have no ventilation. ‘A bad stench’ issues from them, and in this stench the lunatics are forced to live. *Three males were in a state of nudity*; the females wore only chemise, but the mild cases are clothed like other paupers. Fourteen had neither shoes nor stockings during the winter.”

NIAGARA COUNTY.—“The whip is sometimes, though rarely, used to enforce discipline.”

ST. LAWRENCE COUNTY.—“Though no restraint is used by handcuffs, *whipping* is resorted to, and the violent are put in *cages* to subdue them. There are no arrangements for cleanliness, ventilation, or uniformity of heat in winter. The sexes are not separated, but mingle promiscuously, and the attendants are from the family of paupers, who are grossly unfit to administer to them.”

SARATOGA COUNTY.—“This house is old, and badly dilapidated. The rooms are low, sadly out of repair, and the air in

the sleeping-rooms most foul and noisome. Corporal punishment is administered to men, women, and children." (The latter remark apparently refers to sane paupers as well as lunatics.)

SCHENECTADY COUNTY.—"Twenty-five are lunatics. There is no accommodation for the various grades of the insane. The sexes are not separated, except at night."

TIOGA COUNTY.—Twenty-one lunatics are resident. The sexes are not entirely separated. Male attendants are employed to take care of the female insane, and they only paupers; pauper attendants for all the lunatics. The rooms are filthy, and the air in them bad. Five have neither shoes nor stockings during the winter. The building is designed to accommodate only eight. It has now in it twenty-one. They are seldom or never visited by a physician."

ULSTER COUNTY.—"The sexes are kept separate, but male attendants are employed to care for the female insane, and they are pauper inmates of the institution. In 1857 the committee appointed to visit charitable institutions, &c., reported of this place as follows:—'Of the inmates, fifteen are lunatics—three males and twelve females. Ten are confined in cells, and one restrained with chains. Besides the main building, there are several small old buildings on the premises, in one of which—a very poor one—were twelve cells for lunatics, very open, and where it is barely possible to keep them from perishing.' The investigation of 1864 fails to show any considerable improvement in the case of the insane paupers in Ulster County."

GREENE COUNTY.—The information obtained had been very defective. "The report of the committee on charitable institutions in 1857 was as follows:—'Six are confined in cells, five of them are in chains, including two women. They are restrained by confinements, and by wearing chains about their legs and arms. Some are chained to the wall. While visiting the house, the committee observed two men and one woman taken from their cells to the yard for air. There they were all chained to the fence, within a few feet of each other. Those confined in cells are without air, except from a small hole in the door. They are in a wretched state. None are cured or improved, a result certainly to be expected from their present treatment.' It is to be hoped that the condition of the institution, and the care bestowed upon the unfortunate lunatics, has improved since 1857."

I shall conclude these extracts by quoting the following remarks of Dr. Willard's. "In some of these buildings the insane are kept in cages, in cells, dark and prison-like, as if they were convicts, instead of the life-weary, deprived of reason. They are, in numerous instances, left to sleep on straw, like animals, without other bedding; and there are scores, who endure the piercing cold and frost of winter, without either shoes or stockings being provided for them. They are pauper lunatics, and shut out from the charity of the world, where they could at least beg shoes. Insane, in a narrow cell, perhaps without clothing, sleeping on straw or in a bunk, receiving air, and light, and warmth only through a diamond hole through a rough, prison-like door, bereft of sympathy and of social life, except it be with a fellow lunatic, without a cheering influence, or a bright hope of the future! Can any picture be more dismal? and yet it is not over-drawn."

These evils suggest the want of, at least, a *temporary* General Lunacy Board in the United States—a Board composed of some of the leading superintendents of asylums, who would bring prominently under the notice of the authorities, in different parts of the country, the condition of the insane for whom they are responsible, and would urge the provision of sufficient asylum accommodation, or, in the event of this radical measure being postponed, would instruct regarding the arrangements and alterations required in the existing establishments for the humane treatment and comfort of the insane inmates; for there can be little doubt that we must ascribe the continuance of the defects referred to, in a country distinguished for the number and character of its philanthropic institutions, in a great degree, to ignorance, on the part of the public generally, of their very existence. But we fear that there is little likelihood of the creation of a *general* board. It would, we apprehend, be regarded as opposed to the spirit of the constitution of the United States, by which each state regulates its interior arrangements, independently of the central government. Local action must, therefore, be relied on; and the greater responsibility consequently rests on individuals in the districts concerned, to bestir themselves in a patriotic spirit, as well as in the interests of our common humanity, to assist in wiping off this blot on the nation's fair name.

